A LETTER

Humbly addreſs'd to the

RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL of CHESTERFIELD.

BY

Mrs. TERESIA CONSTANTIA MUILMAN.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. ROWLANDS, Bookſeller, at *Pope's Head*, in *Exeter-Change*.

A

LETTER

Humbly addressed to the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Earl of Chesterfield,

BY

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Rowland, Poultry, and Pall-Mall, in Round.

A

LETTER

Humbly addreſs'd

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE the

EARL of CHESTERFIELD.

My LORD,

WHEN you jocoſely recommended to me, the Writing of the *Whole Duty of Woman*, I dare ſay, you imagin'd the Thought expired in the Birth: Firſt, that I believe your Lordſhip does not conceive me capable of a Taſk of ſuch Solidity, and good

Judg-

Judgment; and laſtly, that my own Actions have been conducted with ſo little Wiſdom and Diſcretion, it is hardly poſſible to imagine that ſhe, who has judged ſo ill for herſelf, can have any Conception what the Duty of a Woman really is, or ought to be. I confeſs my general Conduct juſtifies your Opinion of me; but were Appearances ſtill ſtronger againſt me, I am conſcious my Miſconduct has not ariſen from Ignorance, ſo much as a Thouſand concurring unhappy Circumſtances that have attended me; and I readily take Shame to myſelf, that my Love of Pleaſure, and Neglect of the more material Part, has had no ſmall Share in my Miſ-doing. However, my Lord, notwithſtanding Reaſon diſapproves, and that I ſtand even ſelf-condemned, give me Leave to aſſure you, ſtill you are miſtaken; and that what I appear to be, or at leaſt what your Lordſhip ſeems to think me, has no more Reſemblance of the real Woman, than the greateſt Oppoſites in human Nature have to each other.

But, my Lord, my ſaying this, will be no Proof of your Miſtake; unleſs I can otherwiſe demonſtrate what I aſſert: Therefore I hope I ſhall be the more pardonable, if I preſent

ſent your Lordſhip with an Inſtance you are well acquainted with. That five and twenty Years makes a total Alteration not only in us, but our Opinion of Things; I would only beg Leave to aſk your Lordſhip, if thoſe, who have the Honour now to approach you, ſhould look upon you as the gay, pleaſure-loving, wild, unthinking Lord *Stanhope*, amidſt your Companions of the ſame Age, never imagining that twenty Years excellently well employed, had made any Change or Improvement; good Heaven! How would they be deceived, nay, — would they not even deſerve Contempt that could ſo imagine, when inſtead of the unthinking Sallies natural to that Age, in this they would ſee the moſt finiſhed Pattern, of what Man ought to be, that any Age has ever yet produced?

Your Lordſhip has done me the Honour to tell me I am no bad Painter in black and white. Have a Care then, — you are now ſitting for your Picture; and were I ſure to loſe the little Reputation I have gained as an Artiſt this Way, I am determin'd to make it ſo like, it ſhall want nothing but Animation. I know how unconcern'd you are at the Menace, while no conſcious Bluſh of in-

ward

ward Guilt disfigures the Original. Here then you are! — The Canvas, or Ground-work, is Greatness of Mind, Integrity, strict Honour, and a noble Birth. — Pray observe the Features: There is Gravity without Moroseness, the most piercing Wit without ill Nature, perfect good Breeding without Affectation, and a Benevolence of Heart that adds Lustre to the Whole. ——— Well, I have lost my Art if any one, who has the Honour to have ever so distant a Knowledge of your Lordship, hesitates to pronounce it like as the Life. The Picture being finished, I suppose it will be expected I should put the Drapery on: — No, no, my Lord, I shall give myself the Airs of an Artist, and leave that to the Daubers.

My Lord, I had most cautiously avoided a Representation of these rare and amiable Qualities, because I really have an utter Detestation to any Thing that has the least Shadow or Appearance of Flattery; and it is hardly possible to do even Justice to your Lordship, without so far stirring up the Envy of the Generality of your Sex (for my Lord, the Men will envy sometimes as well as the Ladies) that I shall be accused of a Vice that my Soul abhors, while I am telling nothing but the most

moſt ſolemn Truths; therefore would have ſhun'd the Mention I have made of you, had I not been under a Sort of Neceſſity to introduce a Proof of my Judgment in Men, and ſuch a one, as I am ſure will be approv'd of, by every unprejudiced Perſon into whoſe Hands this may happen to fall; for I take it for granted, if I do not raiſe the Expectation of my Readers, by ſhewing my Judgment in Men, they will conceive but an unfavourable Opinion of what I ſhall hereafter recommend as the Duty of a Woman; but I believe at preſent I have given a Teſt that will put it out of Diſpute.

But as I juſt hinted concerning what I appear to be, and really am; when I wait upon your Lordſhip with my uſual Sprightlineſs, and Gaiety, pleas'd with the Chit-chat of an Hour, my Loſs of Beauty is forgotten, and you go back five and twenty Years, for my Entertainment: Yes; and, that I may think you in earneſt, even condeſcend to ſuit your Converſation to that gay Time; imagining, no doubt, that I have too much of the Woman in my Compoſition to endure the Thoughts of antiquated Beauty: But, my Lord, believe me, I am ſo little out of Humour with my Loſs

that Way, I could, with infinite Pleaſure and Entertainment to myſelf, talk to your Lordſhip upon graver Matters, without being under any Apprehenſion my Sentiments would leſſen me in your Eſteem. 'Tis true, I was born conſtitutionally with the greateſt Share of Vivacity and Spirits of any Woman in the World; but, my Lord, I may ſay by Fortune, as *Milton* upon his own Blindneſs: *In my Beginning I was preſented with an univerſal Blank; and the Obligations I had to Nature, were perverted by my accidental Poverty, which turn'd that Beauty that was beſtow'd on me, to ſo many Snares by which I was ruined and undone; and in Conſequence have paſſed my Life in Sorrow and Miſery:* And, however this Declaration may ſhock your Lordſhip's Belief, it is moſt ſolemnly true; for when in my Youth, a Time in which we are generally too much taken up with our Pleaſures, and the Gratification of our Paſſions, to give ourſelves Leiſure to reflect upon the Rectitude of the Means by which we obtain them; even then, I ſay, when we cheat our Underſtandings with the dazling Proſpects of imaginary Pleaſures, ——— I was wretched; ——— becauſe the Pleaſures I taſted, had not their Foundation upon a juſt and honourable Baſis.

——I

——I was allur'd and flatter'd by gay, gaudy Appearances, becauſe I ſaw the Eyes and Adoration of the World, follow'd thoſe Appearances; but, my Lord, my nightly Slumbers, and the Moments we are wont to turn our Eyes inward, were diſturb'd, and the Sweets of Reſt embitter'd by the ſtinging Reflections that follow'd the Means, by which thoſe Appearances were ſupported. Still went I on, in Hopes of better Fate, 'till I found myſelf in the Condition of a young Prodigal, who, having brought his Fortune to the laſt Stake, hazards even that, hoping ſtill to retrieve; and, like him too, (but alas! too late) I found myſelf cheated and undone: And this, (will you believe me, my Lord?) I ſoon found out; but at the ſame Time perceived that cruel Bar for ever ſhut againſt me, a Bar faſhion'd by Cuſtom, againſt our unhappy Sex, when once they offend againſt Virtue's ſacred Rule, which rigorouſly excludes us from any Degree of Fame; be our future Conduct ever ſo nice, or ſcrupulouſly regular. And this very tyrannic, unchriſtian Cuſtom, which I am morally convinced has ruin'd innumerable Women, was the Reaſon I became careleſs of my Conduct; becauſe I found all Efforts to retrieve my Loſs were vain: For, my Lord, were it otherwiſe,

believe me no Woman of Birth, having had but a tolerable Education, could poſſibly, when Reflection return'd, ſubmit to live in any Degree of Infamy, let the Temptations be ever ſo great and flattering. For my own Part, I moſt ſolemnly aver, I would not: To have been Miſtreſs even to an Emperor, I ſhould have always look'd upon as a State of Infamy, Miſery, and Dependence, to which I ſhould have eſteem'd the humbleſt Condition of Innocence that can be imagin'd, infinitely preferable; and ſo true it is, that this particular Infamy, that is caſt upon us when we make the ſmalleſt Slip in our Conduct, prevents not only our Return to Virtue, but makes us careleſs of preſerving even the Appearances of it: Let us live ever ſo long, the ſame Prejudice againſt us ſtill continues; for Inſtance, in myſelf: Though I have been for ſeveral Years quite retired from the World, my Appearance lately as a Writer having obliged me in ſome Shape to renew my Acquaintance wherever I go, I am ſhock'd to find the Men ſtill continue to think me young; or at leaſt to prevent my remembering they are not, I am every where entertain'd with the ſame ludicrous Stuff, they would talk to a Girl of Fifteen. Oh Heaven! could they view themſeves with

my

my Eyes, or hear with my Ears, how would they bluſh to play the *Plantaloon* to a Woman whoſe Soul abhors ſuch Buffoonery; and to make my Mortification ſtill the greater, I am under a Neceſſity to adapt my Converſation to the Farce they think fit to play; becauſe even a Look of Diſapprobation, might poſſibly expoſe me to their Ridicule, and I might be inſulted for what theſe People would term my Hypocriſy. Therefore, at the Age of Forty, when I wait upon a great Man, with whom I had the Honour to become acquainted at Fifteen, we converſe in Maſquerade; he with his Air of Twenty-five, I with mine of Fifteen; which means no more than that he is afraid, I ſhould think he is grown old, and had forſaken his Vices; and in that Caſe, would be under a Neceſſity to treat me with the Senſe and Gravity becoming both our Ages.

Now, my Lord, theſe are the Diſadvantages we labour under from being born Women; and they are ſuch, that, for my own Part, were Beauty as laſting as our Date of Life, to change my Sex I would be contented to be as deform'd and ugly as *Æſop*: Tho' I am confident, did Cuſtom countenance us in the accidental Sallies of

of our Youth, and they were to be forgotten, as in Men, I could vie with the moſt prudent of your Sex for the Regularity of my Conduct theſe many Years, and for the moral Part of it always. It would look too much like writing my own Panegyric, were I to give your Lordſhip a faithful Account of my private Life; and I alſo know, that tho' I could demonſtrate what I here hint at, inconteſtibly to my own Honour; yet this very Cuſtom I ſo bitterly complain of is ſo univerſally prevalent, there is neither Man or Woman, by whoſe Company or Converſation I could think myſelf honour'd, that would dare publicly countenance me, or *ſeem* to believe it poſſible I ſhould poſſeſs any of the moral Virtues, having unhappily err'd in the Point of Chaſtity: *Seem* to believe I ſay, my Lord, becauſe there is no Law, divine or human, that countenances theſe Sort of Gallantries more in one Sex than in the other; therefore muſt this Belief be only *ſeeming*. You will all admit Men may be even profligate in their Amours, and none of you will diſpute their being in all other Reſpects Men of Honour; and, as ſuch, they are admitted into all Companies, and by all Ranks and Degrees of People: And yet, my Lord, this

this Difference between us has no other Sanction than Cuſtom, cruel unequal Cuſtom!

Here I muſt beg Leave to carry my Reflections ſtill a little farther; for Example: Who denies Mr. *Thomas Grimes* to be a Man of Honour and Integrity; yet this very Man, firſt betray'd and ruin'd the unhappy Miſs *Phillips*, baſely, nay villainouſly, ruin'd her, and after that abandoned her to Sorrow, Miſery, and Infamy; which was the Source of all the Ruin and Unhappineſs that has ſince befallen her, and for which ſhe is deſpis'd and ſhun'd by the modeſt and valuable Part of her own Sex, and treated with Levity by your's. *Tartufe* too, is received into the Houſes of all the great People of *England!* tho' there is not a Debauchery, Meanneſs, Hypocriſy, or diſhonourable Action that can be thought of, he has not been guilty of. No Man bluſhes to own he viſits, and is acquainted with, Mr. *Henry Muilman*; tho' he ſtands upon Record perjured, beyond even the Hopes of Mercy, in Public accus'd of every horrid Crime the Laws has yet invented a Puniſhment for; and ſo accuſed that neither by himſelf, or any Hireling under his Inſpection, has one Syllable he is charg'd with been ever contradicted.

My

My Lord, does any Hiſtory furniſh three ſuch Inſtances of diſtinguiſhed Villainy in Men? Yet are their atrocious Crimes buried beneath a Heap of Wealth, and Cuſtom favours their Actions to ſuch a Degree, neither of them are deſpis'd, ſhun'd or neglected by the World, and Men aſſociate with them as tho' they ſtood as fair in the Records of Fame, as ever *Socrates* did.——Have I not therefore Reaſon to repine, that the Laws of Honour ſhould be ſo unequally rigid with Regard to us, when it indulges our Seducers and Betrayers with unlimited Bounds to their Pleaſures, and the frequenting them without Reproach; yes, my Lord, I have, and I am ſure you will be one of the Firſt to own, there is neither Juſtice nor Reaſon for this cruel, unchriſtian Cuſtom; the Fear of which has coſt the Lives of Millions of Infants, both unborn, and the Moment of their Birth. There is nothing ſo ſavage and brutal in our Natures, as to inſpire us with a Reſolution to commit ſanguinary Acts of Cruelty, if we were not terrified by the Apprehenſion, that a Diſcovery would expoſe us to Shame and Infamy irretrievable. In fine, my Lord, this Evil is pregnant with almoſt every Misfortune which happens to us. Were returning Virtue to be rewarded with the

Fa-

Favour and Approbation of the World, you would ſoon ſee it crouded with Penitents of this Sort; and it would be giving our Sex an Opportunity to convince you, they are not inferior to yours either in Virtue or Purity of Morals, when once they arrive at an Age capable of judging for themſelves; but, my Lord, if in the firſt Outſetting of a young Girl's Life, ſhe makes a Slip from Honour, how quick ſoever her Return be, tho' her Life and Conduct ſhould ever after eſcape even the Canker of Envy, yet ſhe ſhall be branded to her laſt Moments with that Misfortune; and if ſhe is beautiful, every Man thinks he has a Right to demand the Poſſeſſion of her Perſon, upon the ſame baſe Terms with the firſt: And really, my Lord, conſidering you are the Law-makers, and always ſeduce us to offend them, I think, in Honour and Juſtice, there ſhould be ſome leſſer Puniſhment, than that of eternal Infamy, affix'd to a Crime in which you are the principal Aiders and Abetters, or elſe, that the Crime ſhould be equally odious in both; *for at preſent the Thief is exempted from Puniſhment, and it is only the Party deſpoiled who ſuffers Death.*

For my Part, my Life has been one conti-

nued Scene of Error, Miſtake, and Unhappineſs. I was by my ill Fate, left Miſtreſs of my Self, before the Time I ought to have forſaken my Nurſery: A great Ducheſs indeed would have been my kind Protectreſs, and have done by my Education, what the good Lady *H——x* did by your Lordſhip during your Infancy; but it pleas'd my Father to (what he called) mortify her, by a Removal of me from her Protection. Like your Lordſhip too, I launch'd early into the World; but you, with all the Advantages of high Birth, and a glorious Fortune: I with nothing but my Beauty, which indeed, while it laſted, amply ſupplied the Deficiencies of my Fortune. No Man living ever made a more ſplendid Figure, than your Lordſhip has done abroad: No Woman, let her Fortune be what it will (out of *England*) made a genteeler one than my Self. But, my Lord, you travelled to do your Country immortal Honour; I wandered in foreign Countries, becauſe Strangers paid me thoſe Honours I was denied in my own; 'till tir'd with ſeeing and being ſeen, I return'd to my native Home, always pined after, tho' the only one in which I have been treated ill. However, from the ſtrange Viciſſitudes of my Fortune, I have at length gleaned this uſeful and

neceſſary

neceſſary Part of Philoſophy: *I have lived in the World long enough to deſpiſe it; I have ſought for a Friend 'till I am tired with the Search*, and I find the only *real Comforts we enjoy* are thoſe we make to ourſelves, which, if I remember right, my Lord, were in Part the Sentiments you were in, when I had laſt the Honour to ſee you; and vain and preſumptuous, as any Sort of Compariſon between us muſt be, it has been of infinite Conſolation to me, when I roam up and down my little Garden, and frequently, "in my Mind's Eye," behold your Lordſhip the ſame Way employ'd, it is then I look down upon the World, and rejoice from my Soul, when I reflect my Way of Thinking in ſome Degree has a Likeneſs of your Lordſhip's.

The ill Treatment I have met with from the World, has taught me Wiſdom, but no Hardneſs of Heart: I am content,——conſequently chearful; and I feel ſo little of the envious Reflections of decay'd Beauty, I am never ſo happy as when I can contribute to the Mirth and Pleaſure of thoſe about me.

In this little State of Tranquility I move; but, as Life would ſoon become tireſome had

we no End to purſue, mine is bent on the Preſervation and Happineſs of an only Siſter and her little Family, of whom I am the ſole Support and Dependence. Part of theſe is one Daughter, now about the Age of Fifteen; and, in the Pains I have taken with her Education, will be beſt deſcribed my Sentiments of the *true Duty of a Woman.*

My Lord, I have taught her to love and fear God as the firſt Principle, on which her every other Happineſs depends; for the modiſh Way of teaching young Ladies this firſt of Duties, I look upon as one of the moſt ſhocking Neglects in their Education; and ſo little is this eſſential Part regarded, if you aſk, of what Religion a fine Lady is, ſhe is ſcarce able to give you a rational Anſwer: Indeed if you proceed farther, and touch upon the Rules and Tenets of it, you find them, *for the moſt Part*, totally ignorant; and I muſt confeſs in either Sex, where they have not *real Religion*, by which, my Lord, I don't mean any particular Cult, but the true Love and Fear of God, there can be no other moral Virtue; for I can very ſoon bring myſelf to conceive, what that Man or Woman's Actions muſt be, who have

no

no Dependance upon future Reward or Puniſhment.

My Lord, I have moſt carefully examined, what the Word VIRTUE means, to prevent this Child's running away with an Idea, that the whole is compriz'd in Chaſtity; for I hold that to be only a Concomitant, and my Way of explaining it to her, is, that it is neceſſary a Woman ſhould have every other moral Virtue to accompany that; and in order to attain to this Pitch of Perfection, I would have her general Behaviour modeſt without Conſtraint, affable without Boldneſs, reſerved without Prudery, and gay without Levity; and, by ſhewing her the Advantages of Temperance and Patience, I hope to make them her Choice. I ſhall endeavour too, to teach her Humility, but without Meanneſs; for I would give her ſuch a Conſciouſneſs of her own Worth, as may tend to her Preſervation. I will alſo endeavour to give her an Idea of Charity, not as it is commonly underſtood, but according to the true, genuine Senſe and Meaning of it; and I look upon one Eſſential of that Charity, we are recommended to practiſe for one another, to be an utter Deteſtation for Detraction. Truth, my Lord, I recommended as a Fundamental

mental never to be varied from, and the ſtricteſt Watch over her Paſſions; for tho' no human Creature is able to attain a total Government of them; yet, cloſely guarded, they may be kept in ſuch Subjection, as to give us the proper Maſtery of them; and, in that Caſe, how many Evils do we avoid? By remembering her of the ridiculous Figure ſhe frequently obſerves talking Women make, ſhe will find the Neceſſity of a competent Share of Taciturnity; and that ſhe may be ſure to keep her own Secrets, I have taught her to think it diſhoneſt to betray other People's.

I remember an Obſervation of *Montaigne*, who was ſo ſcrupulouſly careful of the Education of an only Daughter, when his Wife died, he took a Governeſs into the Houſe for her Inſtruction; and being one Day in Hearing, when the young Lady was reading, ſhe came to the Word which in *Engliſh* ſignifies a Beech-Tree, but in *French* bears a *double Entendre*. The Governeſs reproved her for not going over that Word, with, *Oh fie, Miſs, you ſhould have gone over that naughty Word; you muſt never ſay it again.*

Mon-

—*Montaigne*'s Reflections were upon this Circumſtance, that theſe Sort of fooliſh Cautions rais'd a Curioſity in young Girls Minds, that was frequently fatal to them; and I am convinced he is right; for to teach young Girls *Prudery*, I verily believe may be as pernicious to them as *Libertiniſm*. They learn from that to maſk and conceal their Paſſions, but never to conquer them; and they lay ſmothered only as Fire pent up for want of Air, which, if ever they give a Vent to, ſpreads to their Deſtruction. Therefore, my Lord, am I very careful how I talk myſteriouſly before this Child; and whenever I mention any thing to her that concerns her Behaviour towards the Sex, I never talk of them as Scarecrows; but endeavour to inculcate, how far they may, conducted by her own Prudence, be inſtrumental to her Happineſs, and, without that ſpecial Care of herſelf, to her Miſery.

She is a beautiful Girl, yet, in my Life, I never told her, that Beauty had, or ought to have, one ſingle Grain of Merit eſſential to her Well-being; on the contrary, that there is no other Way to make herſelf happy, but by endeavouring to cultivate thoſe laſting Ac-

com-

compliſhments of which Men never tire,—— a well-taught, honeſt Mind.

She has great Sharpneſs of Wit and Vivacity. This, my Lord, I keep under the ſevereſt Conſtraint, by perpetually expoſing to her View Pictures of Ridicule, in the Characters of witty Wives, which begging their Pardons, I muſt confeſs I think one of the greateſt Curſes an honeſt Man can be tormented with. In ſhort, I have an utter Abhorrence for Wit at any Rate, unleſs, as in your Lordſhip, it is in a ſenſible, good-natured Man's keeping; but in a Wife it is productive of many Ills. The firſt Thing one of theſe witty ones generally finds out is, that her Huſband is a Fool; and can there be a more dangerous Situation in Nature for a Woman? They may flatter themſelves, with an Opinion of the Figure they make in that Light; but, my Lord, I do inſiſt upon it, the only one they can ever ſhine in, is that which borrows it's Luſtre from their Huſbands.—— But to return to my Niece.

To prevent it ever creeping into her Thoughts, that any Woman can be a Goddeſs, I take Care her Reading ſhall be ſuited to the

Lectures

Lectures I give. I am not, nor in my Life ever was, poſſeſſed of a Novel or Romance. She has *Telemaque* to read for the Improvement of her *French*, Dr. *Tillotſon* for her *Engliſh*, and both I hope for her moral Inſtruction. *La Bruyere* I lay near her, by Way of Looking-glaſs; and now and then, inſtead of telling her what I mean, ſet her to tranſlate ſome of the uſeful Places. How my Endeavours may ſucceed, Heaven only knows; but theſe are the beſt Methods I can ſuggeſt to train up a Girl, by which ſhe can ever learn what is *truly the Duty of a Woman*; and, if ſhe lives to that Eſtate, this Ground-work I hope will produce Condeſcention, Affability, Temperance, Prudence, Charity, Chaſtity and Wiſdom, out of which Materials, if ſhe does not make the Man happy who falls to her Lot, I am afraid it will be his own Fault.

Your Lordſhip is as good a Judge as any Man breathing what we ought to be. I beſeech you tell me, if you think my Syſtem a good one. If my Girl lives 'till ſhe is Twenty, I ſhall recommend to her Peruſal that celebrated Performance of your Lordſhip's, *the whole Duty of Man*; *but at preſent the Morality it teaches, I think is Matter for older Heads than her's. Indeed, having the Honour to be*

 pretty

pretty well acquainted with your Lordſhip, I am ſurprized when I read it, and unleſs I had had it from your own Mouth that you were the Author of that pious Book, could never have believed your Lucubrations could have turned upon a Syſtem of Religion and Self-denial, ſo full of Auſterity and Mortification.

Your Lordſhip will I hope pardon my mentioning your being the *Author of that ineſtimable Piece*, as you enjoined me to no ſort of Secrecy; but I don't know where to produce an Inſtance, that does ſo much Honour to my own Opinion, *that there is nothing we are ſo often miſtaken in as Appearances.* When one ſees your Lordſhip with a half-downcaſt Look, twirling your Thumbs, I muſt confeſs myſelf one of thoſe Heretics, who heretofore ſuſpected your ſtifled Thoughts were much more governed by the Fleſh than the Spirit. Methinks I now ſee your Lordſhip, in the very Poſition I have this Moment deſcribed, turning your Thumbs one over the other, and that your Thoughts are, *Why, what an odd Sort of a Devil this is? there is no knowing what to make of her.* And in fine, that you are as much ſurpriz'd at a Sheet of moral Reaſoning from me, as I can be when I turn over the WHOLE

DUTY

DUTY OF MAN, and recollect LORD CHESTERFIELD to be the Author.

My Lord, give me Leave to tell you, you have drawn this upon yourſelf: I told you my Intention was to have done Writing; and that if the World would forgive me the Treſpaſs I had made upon their Patience, I would do ſo no more; your Lordſhip ſaid, *No, poſitively no*, that *I muſt ſtill write again*, and gave me for a Subject the firſt which came into your Head, i. e. *The whole Duty of Woman*; and, to convince your Lordſhip I thoroughly underſtand what that means in your Senſe of it, I look upon *Obedience* to be a principal Part, in Conſequence of which, I have wrote your Lordſhip what I conceive the Duty of a Woman to be; and the only certain Means by which they can attain (at leaſt) ſuch a Part of it as comes within my Comprehenſion. I am however ſenſible, there may be great Amendments made, and that ſeveral neceſſary Hints may be given, towards the rendering my Syſtem compleat. I am quite conſcious I fail; but in what Part, I muſt ſubmit to abler Heads.

Now, my Lord, I don't at all doubt but this will draw the Sneers of the Smarts upon me, about which I declare myſelf abſolutely unconcern'd. I have already mention'd the

Impoſſibility, which I know I labour againſt, were I to attempt any Juſtification of my own Character; for Prejudice was, and Paſſion is, too mighty againſt me, for the Voice of Truth and Reaſon to be heard; and I know alſo, any String that is touch'd upon, to ſound my Praiſes, would be Diſcord to the Ears of a prejudiced World, whoſe Food is Calumny. There are the great Vulgar as well as the ſmall; and I don't know that either of them overflow with the *Milk of human Kindneſs*.

Fame, as a Writer, I am in ſo little Concern for, it is a Thing that never entered my Head: Therefore Criticiſms can no Way gall me; and Witticiſms I can never fear, while your Lordſhip is pleaſed to condeſcend to be my Protector. The World has always been at War with me, under Pretence of my leading a blameable Life: I with them, for the Reaſons I have given; and alſo, that there are but few of my Enemies who do not apparently practiſe themſelves the Vices they pretend to diſapprove in me; but by the Aid of Fortune, or ſome other Aid, they eſcape Scandal, or which is the ſame Thing, are above it. But I believe there is ſcarce to be found a Condition like mine. I was vilified by the World before I told what Motives my Actions had been

governed

governed by, and was condemned by all, to whom I related ever ſo ſmall a Part of my Story, that, if it was true, I did not tell it to the Public in my own Juſtification: I am now torn to Pieces and abuſed, for having told Truths that make ſo much againſt my Enemies. Therefore, my Lord, quite careleſs who are the Laughers or Frowners, I ſhall henceforward proceed, endeavouring as far as I am able to do well; and am under no Sort of Concern for, or Expectation of, the good Word of the Evil-minded, or the Approbation of the Malevolent and Envious; neither will I ever endeavour to hit any Man a Box on the Ear, who has not firſt trod upon my Foot.

My Lord, from this careleſs Reſolution I have taken up, I hope you will not imagine I am ſetting the World at Defiance; quite otherwiſe: From the Privileges I have taken myſelf (inconſiderable as I am) I know every Reader is ſuperior to a Writer; and that they are all veſted with the natural Power of applauding or blaming as they are inclined. But I have been informed by my Father, (than whom no Man had in his Time greater Experience, having, even from his Childhood, been a Soldier) that *frequent Engagements make a Man enter upon Action with great Unconcern.* Therefore,

as

as during my whole Life, I have been accuſtomed to the Mal-treatment of the World, whether deſervedly or no, their Wit will loſe its Edge on me. It is not Mrs. *Phillips*, who by Writing incurs their Diſpleaſure; it is her having ſhewn how far they have been acceſſary to her Diſtreſſes: Therefore will ſhe ſit down content, let them cenſure, or approve; ever reſolved to offend them as little as ſhe can.

The Performance I have lately made public, I do aſſure your Lordſhip, I never intended ſhould have ſeen the Light, 'till I was laid in the Grave; and quite indifferent of the Succeſs it would have then met with, I only meant to convince my own Family I had not been ſo much to blame as they imagined,——and the World in general, that there was nothing ſo little to be depended upon as *common Fame*. But my Misfortunes have obliged me to do that for Subſiſtence, I never deſigned to make any other Uſe of than in my own Juſtification: And I muſt confeſs I am now well pleaſed it has happened ſo; ſince I ſee how *hard it is to convince a prejudiced World of Truths, even tho' they are told of living People, who have it in their Power, if injured, to ſet their Wrongs in a true Light*: And, had I been breathleſs, I make no doubt but Mrs. *Phillips*'s *Apology* would

would have been read in the Character of a Romance, as much as *Tom Jones*, or any other Novel.—But it is, under all it's Diſadvantages, now gone forth; and tho' as a great Lord told me, *What tho' it be true he would deny it and ſhould be believed before me*, yet, my Lord, as thoſe I have accuſed ſtill live, if I have done them Wrong, they would do well to juſtify themſelves, while I live; for if they delay 'till I am in the Grave, it will be then too late. The Moment my Eyes are cloſed, the Facts aſſerted in my Books become immortal, even tho' deny'd by the noble Lord I hint at, his Couſin, *&c. &c.*

My Lord, as to Diction, Stile, Language, Flowers of Rhetoric, or any one Art neceſſary to a Writer, I know I am totally ignorant of them; and Truth, plain Truth, in it's native ſimple Dreſs, is all I depend on. The Heroes of my Hiſtory have forced me into a Method to get my Bread, I confeſs myſelf quite unqualified for; but, as the Variety of their Actions have furniſhed me with inexhauſtible Matter, while I can ſcratch upon Paper, I will if poſſible not ſit down without a Dinner;——Tho' I believe, when I have compiled the *Promiſed Sequel* to a Hiſtory*, part of which I have already related, your Lordſhip will

* The Hiſtory of TARTUFE.

will be of Opinion, *that Man had better have contented himſelf with ſeven Diſhes to have given me two, than have feaſted upon nine with* this Sequel *for his Deſert.*

It remains now that I beg your Lordſhip's Pardon, for taking up ſo much of your Time upon Matters which I am quite conſcious can afford you ſo little Entertainment. When your Lordſhip put it in my Head to write this, and gave me Leave to dedicate it to you, I very well knew what was your kind Intention: But if you will do me the Honour to reflect how flattering the Occaſion is, which puts it in my Power to open my Heart to your Lordſhip, you will excuſe every Crudity it contains. I can, with ſincere Truth, ſwear, had Heaven bleſſed me with Talents capable of compoſing the moſt perfect Piece, it ſhould be at your Lordſhip's Feet I would lay it; and I can further add, with the greateſt Truth, that, to what Fate ſoever I am reſerved, while I have Exiſtence, even Time itſelf ſhall never diminiſh an Atom of the profound Reſpect, with which I ſhall always be,

My LORD,

April 5, 1750. *Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient humble Servant,*

T. C. MUILMAN.

303218